

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

LIBRARY
CURR
ORD

FEB 13 1956

Research Note

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

INTERMOUNTAIN FOREST & RANGE EXPERIMENT STATION OGDEN UTAH

No. 24

December 1955

NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN POLE PRODUCTION IN 1954

Roscoe B. Herrington
Division of Forest Economics

Pole production in the northern Rocky Mountain area^{1/} slumped to a record low during 1954. The annual survey^{2/} of pole production in this area shows a decline in the pole output of all species as production dropped over 30 percent from last year.

Western redcedar continued to be the most popular species, followed by lodgepole pine, western larch, and Douglas-fir, in that order (table 1). Western redcedar and lodgepole pine composed over 85 percent of the total production.

Substantially fewer poles were produced in the Washington area in 1954 than during any other period since 1947, the year the survey was originated.

Table 1.--Number of poles produced in 1954

Species	Northern Rocky Mountain area				:Percent : of : total
	: Montana	: North	:Northeast	: Total	
	: Idaho	:Washington:			
Western redcedar	3,092	126,035	9,497	138,624	49.83
Lodgepole pine	101,842	0	0	101,842	36.61
Western larch	31,829	5,075	34	36,938	13.28
Douglas-fir	768	0	0	768	0.28
Total	137,531	131,110	9,531	278,172	
Percent	49.44	47.13	3.43		100.00

^{1/} The area embraces Montana, that portion of Idaho north of the Salmon River, and the following counties of northeastern Washington: Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, and Whitman.

^{2/} Sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Pole and Treating Association. All known pole-producing companies were contacted by mail. The excellent cooperation of these companies is greatly appreciated.

The number of poles produced within the northern Rocky Mountain area in 1954 was 34 percent of total production during the peak year of 1947 and 67 percent of 1953 production. Table 2 shows the change in output from 1953 and 1947.

Table 2.--Percent change in total 1954 pole production from previous year and peak production year

Species	Change from	
	: 1953	: 1947
P e r c e n t		
Western redcedar	-27.6	-40.0
Lodgepole pine	-59.1	-83.4
Western larch	-20.8	-71.0
Douglas-fir	-78.1	-88.1
Total	-34.0	-66.0

The poles reported in tables 1 and 2 were grown in the northern Rocky Mountain area. Additional poles are received from Canada and the West Coast area of the United States. Subsequent discussion and tabulations refer to the total number of poles processed. This includes imported poles as well as poles grown within the northern Rocky Mountain area.

Table 3 shows the source of the total number of poles processed in the northern Rocky Mountain area. Through the years, imported poles have constituted 22 to 45 percent of the total processed pole production. The percentage of poles imported in 1954 was the largest on record, with Canada furnishing nearly all the imports. Over 69 percent of the total western redcedar pole output was imported from Canada.

Table 3.--Total 1954 processed pole production by source

Species	:Northern : Rocky :Mountains	: Canada	: West : Coast	: Total	: Percent : of : total
Western redcedar	138,624	212,420	8,595	359,639	70.9
Lodgepole pine	101,842	0	0	101,842	20.1
Western larch	36,938	7,098	0	44,036	8.7
Douglas-fir	768	726	280	1,774	0.3
Total	278,172	220,244	8,875	507,291	
Percent	54.8	43.4	1.8		100.0

Total pole output has fluctuated yearly. No definite trend is indicated; however, the quantity of Douglas-fir poles produced was unusually small this year. As indicated in table 4, the total pole output since 1947 has been slightly over 6 million poles.

Table 4.--Total poles processed in the northern Rocky Mountain area from all sources

Year	: Western : redcedar	: Lodgepole : pine	: Western : larch	: Douglas- : fir	: Total
1947	448,544	375,545	252,205	91,134	<u>1/1,167,428</u>
1948	384,837	142,490	103,693	43,231	<u>1/674,251</u>
1949	521,847	186,262	143,888	58,606	910,603
1950	418,982	92,338	90,793	14,154	616,267
1951	283,171	136,628	138,852	39,662	598,313
1952	471,104	104,621	213,336	84,777	873,838
1953	443,570	128,818	90,246	13,218	675,852
1954	<u>359,639</u>	<u>44,036</u>	<u>101,842</u>	<u>1,774</u>	<u>507,291</u>
Total	3,331,694	1,210,738	1,134,855	346,556	6,023,843

1/ Ponderosa pine poles were reported for these years: 1947, 6,557 poles; 1948, 804 poles.

Table 5 shows the classification of poles reported by species, American Standards Association class, and length. In general, the demand seems to have been for lengths of 40 feet or less in the 4 to 7 A.S.A. classes.

Table 5.--Classification of 1954 pole production by species, A.S.A. class, and length. Northern Rocky Mountain area

Pole length feet	A. S. A. Class											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	All	
Percent of total												
Western redcedar												
25 & shorter	0.16	0.32	0.61	0.86	2.18	3.11	1.83	1.45	2.88	0.38	13.78	
30	0.12	0.17	0.55	1.44	3.23	3.24	4.88	0.78	0.10	1/ 0	14.51	
35	0.33	0.57	1.87	4.43	10.43	6.39	3.30	0.21	0.07	0	27.60	
40	0.31	0.86	2.93	7.28	5.97	0.78	0.02	0	0	0	18.15	
45	0.37	1.01	2.71	3.77	1.00	0.04	0	0	0	0	8.90	
50	0.67	0.99	2.18	1.23	0.20	0	0	0	0	0	5.27	
55 & longer	1.90	4.28	3.82	1.76	0.03	0	0	0	0	0	11.79	
All	3.86	8.20	14.67	20.77	23.04	13.56	10.03	2.44	3.05	0.38	100.00	
Lodgepole pine												
25 & shorter	0.02	0.03	0.06	0.16	0.50	1.88	4.81	0.82	13.86	1.92	24.06	
30	0.02	0.06	0.19	0.56	2.73	5.27	13.50	1.56	0.41	1/ 0.03	24.33	
35	0.05	0.13	0.35	2.04	7.45	12.93	13.23	1.44	1/ 0	0	37.62	
40	0.05	0.25	1.74	3.48	3.80	1.72	0	0	0	0	11.04	
45	0.02	0.15	0.79	0.70	0.28	0.01	0	0	0	0	1.95	
50	0.01	0.08	0.26	0.09	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	0.46	
55 & longer	0.03	0.16	0.30	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.54	
All	0.20	0.86	3.69	7.08	14.78	21.81	31.54	3.82	14.27	1.95	100.00	
Western larch												
25 & shorter	0.39	0.14	1.13	0.55	1.65	3.57	3.11	0.40	0.86	0.12	11.92	
30	0.29	0.44	0.37	2.41	2.67	3.35	7.57	0.02	0.07	0	17.19	
35	0.46	0.73	0.85	5.47	9.79	6.43	5.68	0	0	0	29.41	
40	0.55	1.09	3.40	11.96	2.27	0.90	0.01	0	0	0	20.18	
45	0.27	1.11	2.43	3.62	0.70	0.06	0	0	0	0	8.19	
50	0.31	1.55	2.22	0.39	0.21	0	0	0	0	0	4.68	
55 & longer	1.77	3.45	2.77	0.44	-	0	0	0	0	0	8.43	
All	4.04	8.51	13.17	24.84	17.29	14.31	16.37	0.42	0.93	0.12	100.00	
Douglas-fir												
25 & shorter	0.17	0	0.17	0.28	0.11	0.06	0.45	0.06	0.23	0	1.53	
30	1.69	1.02	1.92	2.42	3.72	10.37	9.13	0	0	0	30.27	
35	2.37	2.93	1.63	2.59	2.37	3.15	9.92	0	0	0	24.96	
40	3.33	3.21	2.54	2.14	6.71	0	0	0	0	0	17.93	
45	0.73	0.90	1.07	1.02	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.72	
50	0.23	1.07	1.07	0.51	0	0.06	0	0	0	0	2.94	
55 & longer	1.80	4.62	11.33	0.90	0	0	0	0	0	0	18.65	
All	10.32	13.75	19.73	9.86	12.91	13.64	19.50	0.06	0.23	0	100.00	
All Species												
25 & shorter	0.15	0.25	0.55	0.69	1.79	2.89	2.53	1.22	4.90	0.66	15.63	
30	0.12	0.18	0.47	1.35	3.08	3.68	6.86	0.87	0.16	0.01	16.78	
35	0.29	0.51	1.48	4.04	9.75	7.70	5.52	0.44	0.05	0	29.78	
40	0.29	0.76	2.73	6.90	5.22	0.97	0.02	0	0	0	16.89	
45	0.30	0.84	2.29	3.13	0.82	0.04	0	0	0	0	7.42	
50	0.50	0.85	1.79	0.93	0.17	-	0	0	0	0	4.24	
55 & longer	1.51	3.38	3.05	1.30	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	9.26	
All	3.16	6.77	12.36	18.34	20.85	15.28	14.93	2.53	5.11	0.67	100.00	

1/ Dash (-) indicates less than 0.01 percent; zero (0), no production.